

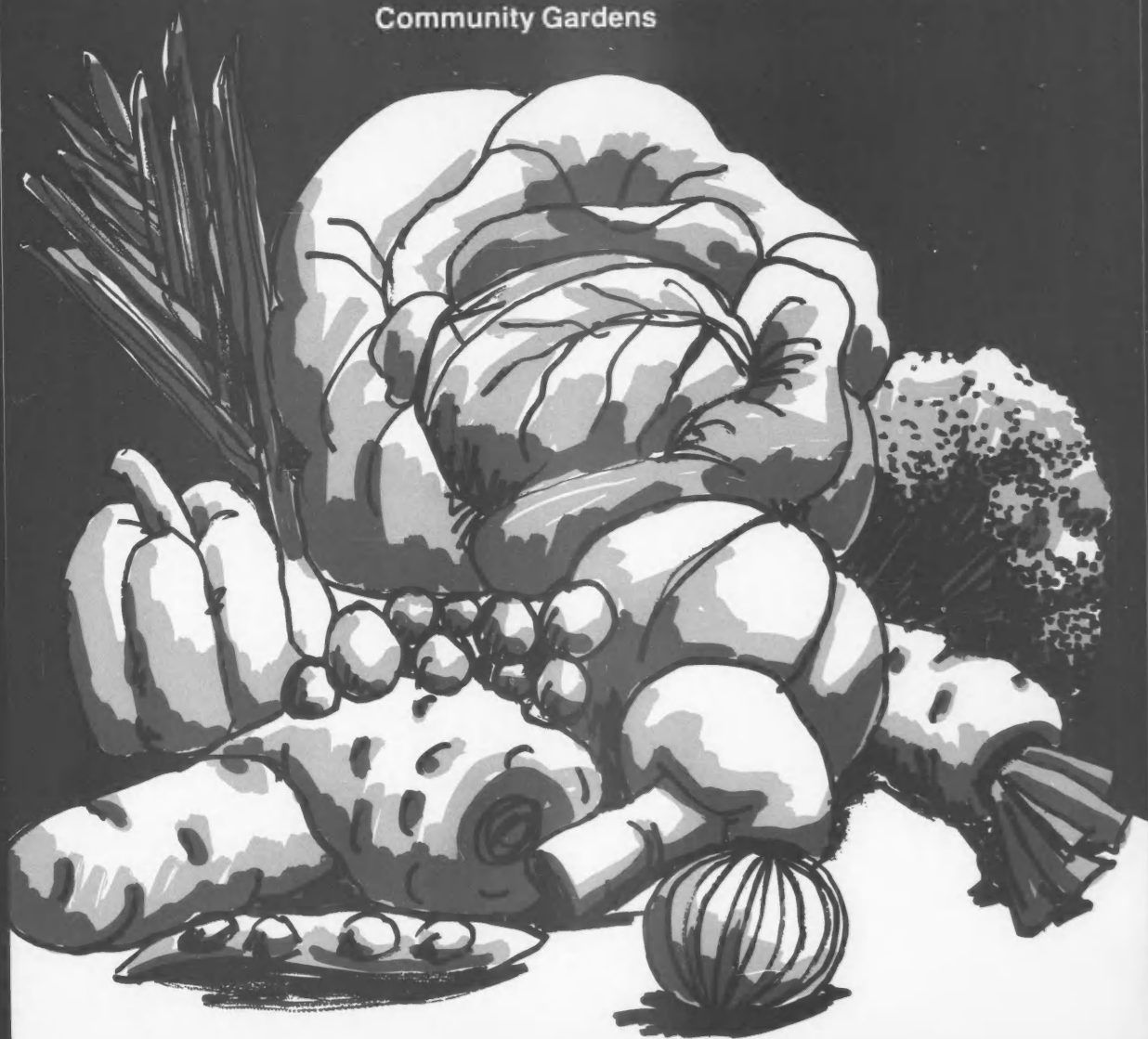


U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Washington, D.C. 20410

Volume XI Number 7 July 1980 \$1.40

Challenge!

Community Gardens





Meany Building Planned

The late George Meany, president of the AFL-CIO for 24 years until his retirement last year, will be remembered through a "living memorial" in the form of a labor archives building. The AFL-CIO said the building, to be constructed on the campus of the George Meany Center for Labor Studies in Silver Spring, Maryland, will be used to store Meany's personal papers and other materials involving the American labor movement since World War II.

Rise in Construction Defects Predicted

The National Association of Home Builders has warned that a new wave of complaints concerning construction defects can be expected once the industry returns to normal production levels and cited the loss of skilled labor as one of the problems. The association noted that the current Government-fostered recession will bring the unemployment rate in construction to 23 percent by fall, when 1.1 million wage and salary employees will be out of work. Many of these will be skilled workers who will never return to housing. As a result, builders will be forced to hire more unskilled workers when production does pick up. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that the work quality will not be as good as it would have been had builders been able to maintain their work forces, the NAHB concludes.

5th Annual Block Grant Report

HUD's Block Grant program is the major funding source for revitalizing distressed communities and preventing problems in healthier ones. Findings of the 5th Annual Report on the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program reveal that:

- the dual formula, used to determine the annual funds received by cities over 50,000 population, is targeting funds to cities with the greatest need;
- housing assistance plan performance, designed to provide housing for the poor, is proceeding at about the same rate as spending levels, both of which have increased over previous years;
- a majority of communities using the increased flexibility in CDBG economic development activities are leveraging other Federal and private funds; and
- benefits in 1979 increased to a record 69 percent of all block grant funds spent.

The report analyzes activities carried out by communities and determines trends of fund expenditure. This year's report determined that about 40 percent of all CDBG funds were used for neighborhood preservation activities, which is now the dominant strategy followed by communities. Copies of the report may be

obtained from HUD, Community Planning and Development, Office of Evaluation, Room 7144, Washington, D.C. 20410.

Building Standard for Physically Handicapped

A new American National Standard for making buildings and facilities more accessible and usable for physically handicapped persons has been announced by HUD. The improved standard is the result of a project funded by HUD's Office of Policy Development and Research and conducted by the Syracuse University School of Architecture. The project was guided by the National Easter Seal Society and the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped. The new standard is the outcome of a 5-year period of research, testing and consultations with representatives from construction, manufacturing, design, insurance, government, and the handicapped. Accessible bathrooms and kitchens and other elements of housing are included for the first time. Also, it contains more figures and mandatory specifications than the existing standard, first approved in 1961. Copies of the revised standard (ANSI Standard A117.1-1980) are available from the American National Standards Institute, 1430 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10018. Reports on the research and testing that went into the development of the new standard are available from HUD USER, P.O. Box 280, Germantown, Md. 20767 (301/482-3105).

Local Initiatives Support Corporation

A new organization was recently formed to help existing community development groups revitalize urban neighborhoods throughout the country. Known as the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), it starts with two-year funding of \$9.35 million from six major corporate donors and lenders and the Ford Foundation:

Aetna Life & Casualty Foundation	\$1,000,000
Atlantic Richfield Foundation	100,000
Continental Illinois National Bank and Trust Company of Chicago	250,000
International Harvester Company	750,000
Levi Strauss & Co.	500,000
Prudential Insurance Company of America	2,000,000
Ford Foundation	4,750,000

Technical assistance, investments, and matching seed money from LISC are expected to generate hundreds of millions of dollars more in private and governmental grants and investments in the economic, physical, and social improvement of the participating communities — up to 100 in the next 5 years. LISC is located at 666 Third Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017.

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NOTE: The volume number on the June 1980 issue of *Challenge!* was incorrect. The number should have been XI.



Why Gardening?

by Roger P. Scharmer

If you were to ask gardeners why they garden, a most typical response would be "to get good things to eat." Ask them for some more reasons and it's here that the responses go beyond the obvious and get quite interesting.

Gardening is productive, educational, therapeutic, nourishing, ego building and spiritual. Twenty minutes in a garden tending plants is like an hour's walk on an uncrowded beach. Peace, contentment and meaning are all found in the garden. National heroes, leaders and business tycoons such as George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, William Randolph Hearst and even King Louis XIV of France found great pleasure, meaning and contentment in their gardening efforts. They often would prefer to garden than to govern.

For all of us who want to garden and to enjoy the pleasures and productivity of a garden, what are some of the more obvious reasons that keep us flipping through mail order garden catalogs during the winter and watering during the summer. Here are some of the main

reasons for gardening that have captured a wide, diverse audience since the beginning of time:

- Gardening produces a supply of tasty, healthful, nutritious food for the body.
- Growing one's own food means large savings in the household budget.
- Gardening puts people in touch with their environment. Local geography, climate, soil conditions and environmental elements must be understood to grow good crops.
- Gardening is responsive to the seasons. Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter all dictate special gardening conditions.
- Gardening can be enjoyed by all ages, sexes, and ethnic backgrounds.
- Forty-two percent of American households (33 million households) had food gardens in 1979, making gardening one of the most popular leisure activities in America – more popular than fishing (36%), jogging (28%), tennis (19%), and golf (12%).
- The total retail value of produce from U.S. gardens in 1979 was \$13 billion.
- The average cost per garden was \$19; the average dollar yield per garden was

\$325; the total net saving per garden was \$306.

- The median garden size was 595 square feet (approximately 20' x 30').
- The most popular vegetable was the tomato! The least popular were brussels sprouts!
- Economy, pleasure, and taste are the main reasons gardening is so popular.
- Three out of four gardeners preserve some of the harvest, with freezing being the most popular method.
- More than seven million landless families say they would garden if land were available.
- A recent survey showed that 88 percent of the parents of school age children want gardening taught in schools.
- A 50' x 25' vegetable garden plot can feed a family of four (and then some).

Source: *Gardens for All News*, 1979/80

Mr. Scharmer is a preservation planner working primarily for historic environment consultants. He has a background in landscape architecture, city planning and real estate. He is also an avid gardener.

Urban and Community Gardens

by Roger P. Scharmer

As fuel energy costs rise, inflation soars, and household budgets are in a squeeze, more and more people are turning to one of the most rewarding arts, the art of gardening. In a 1979 Gallup Poll, gardening rated as one of the most popular leisure time activities in America with 42 percent of the population having food gardens. Gardening is followed by other leisure activities such as fishing – 36 percent, jogging – 28 percent, tennis – 19 percent, and golf – 12 percent. Thirty-three million U.S. families have gardens on land that they own. One million families garden in community gardens on land they don't own. Some 10 million families who do not have land of their own would garden if they had the opportunity to do so. These Gallup Poll results indicate the already present and growing interest in people growing their own nutritious food. It also points to a community development need – that of providing gardening space within our urbanized areas for those who want to garden on land they don't own or can't afford.

Our country's heritage in agriculture and gardening is a long tradition ranging in time and place from the Eastern English tobacco plantations, to the Western wheat fields. George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and other early U.S. Presidents saw us as an agrarian Nation. The Industrial Revolution changed this concept, and we became an urban Nation with an economy based on industrial production. Yet agriculture continues to be a major economic force in the country, and the dream of having a small farm in the country away from the chaos of urban living is a personal fantasy shared by many Americans.

Growing one's own food has been a national cause during much of our country's history. School Gardens (1900-1920), Garden City Plots (1905-1920), Liberty Gardens (1917-1919), Relief Gardens (1930-1939), Victory Gardens (1941-1945), and now Community

Gardens (1970 to the present) are all similar in concept and show the continuing interest of garden programs in the U.S.

During the decades of the 1950's and 1960's America was a Nation on the move. Gas tanks were full, the exodus from urban centers to new suburban communities was in full swing, new Interstate freeway systems encouraged longer travel distances, and half empty airplanes flew us on flights to far-off foreign lands. Now this lifestyle is fading as fuel costs make us more conscious of even short-distance travel, and the zany pace of these two previous decades is slowing down. The advent of concerns about toxic chemical poisoning through the use of insecticides and pesticides has also added impetus to raising our own pure organically grown food. As a Nation we're now not quite sure that "Better Things for Better Living" come from chemical companies. These doubts and considerations have created a new interest in growing one's own produce in a small garden plot. New community development concepts should and are now including gardening plots as a part of new urban development plans.

Community Gardens

The concept of community gardens is not new. Commons, trust lots, parks and open space are all words that have been included in our vocabulary of urban development. Study the evolution of any city and you'll discover a place and time when community gardening occurred. Currently, plots available to the public for gardening activities are being called Community Gardens.

A community garden is a kind of city farm. Often located on a parcel of underused public or private land, the property is developed for agricultural production and subdivided into manageable plots providing an area where households can grow fruits and vegetables to provide nutritious, healthy



Background landscaping in the commons area contains peas, lettuce and a happy gardener.

produce for their daily diets. In its most simple definition, a community garden is a place to garden for many people. It can be a permanent spot or a temporary location.

The key ingredient to a community garden is land. The land can be in public or private ownership, leased or rented, but for gardening production, the land should be available for a minimum of 3 years to allow for good agricultural production. Other necessary resources for community gardens are water, seeds, equipment and people. Throughout our cities are places available for community gardens. They include:

- vacant lots;
- existing and future urban renewal sites;
- church or school properties;
- a section of a public park;
- unused parking areas;
- unused transitional farmland;
- common areas of newer subdivisions;
- utility company rights-of-way; and
- land owned by local, county, State; and, Federal agencies.

Those interested in community gardening can talk with a local planning commissioner, park official, housing and redevelopment person, or community action leader in order to find a site suitable for a community garden.

Community Garden Organizations

To assist in the development and promotion of community gardens, various public and private organizations have taken a leadership role. These organizations offer technical assistance and resources to assist neighborhood groups in fulfilling their desires to establish a community gardening program.

The Trust for Public Land (TPL)

With its headquarters in San Francisco and field offices throughout the U.S., this private, nonprofit conservation organization specializes in acquiring land

for public use. Founded in 1973, the Trust works with community groups, landowners and public land management agencies to preserve open space lands and to pioneer methods in community ownership. Steve Costa of TPL's San Francisco office states that the Trust has assisted many local neighborhood groups in obtaining ownership of lands for community gardening. Because less than four percent of local community gardens are in some kind of permanent ownership status, TPL has been assisting in the formation of local neighborhood land trusts which control, oversee and coordinate permanent local community gardening programs on their neighborhood lands. Steve states that the program has been used extensively in Oakland, California, and there on a typical 3,000 – 5,000 square foot lot divided into 10' x 15' gardening plots, 25 to 30 families can produce \$500 to \$700 worth of produce a year. A technical booklet prepared by TPL and the U.S. Department of Interior titled "Citizen's Action Manual – A Guide to Recycling Vacant Property in Your Neighborhood" has all the current information on establishing community gardens and is available from the U.S. Government Printing Office.

Gardens for All/The National Association for Gardening

Formed in 1972 and located in Shelburne, Vermont, this nonprofit organization acts as a national clearinghouse for both community and general gardening information. Their booklet titled "Guide to Community Garden Organization" offers a step by step, successful procedure for establishing a community garden.

U.S. Department of Agriculture

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, through its Agriculture Extension Offices, has assisted in the formulation and funding of local community gardens. A check with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the local State Department of

agriculture and local State university agriculture schools will be productive to those seeking assistance in community garden programs.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development – HUD

Local communities can use portions of their Community Development Block Grant monies for community gardens. Community gardens are considered an eligible activity for CDBG funds.

Local Park and Recreation Departments

Often in many cities, local park and recreation departments have provided the land used for community gardens. Use of their lands, equipment, technical knowledge and coordination has been helpful to community gardening folk. San José, California Parks Department, has developed a leadership role in its assistance to community gardens. In an historical context and in a period when park departments are feeling the effects of budget cutbacks, perhaps it's time for park officials to look more to the functional productive use of park lands rather than to the green entertainment format they have developed during the last three decades. Their role in community gardening developments rather than passive green open spaces can provide an exciting new direction for park lands.

What to Expect From a Community Garden

While urban folks might dream of a garden located on flat, fertile river bottom soil and a landscape peppered with red barns with adjacent white clapboard houses similar to a photo from a Vermont calendar, urban community gardens don't quite fulfill that visual image. Urban community gardens are intensive food producing plots that often frankly do not look like a park developed by Olmstead or your neighborhood Parks and Recreation Department. They are designed in a highly functional, utilitarian



An early spring garden will soon yield nutritious produce.

manner; incorporate lots of found and scrounged recycled materials; include such items as compost and mulch piles; and generally operate on extremely small budgets. Most garden areas assess the users a minimal fee (\$5-\$10 for the season), provide free or discount seeds, offer water, fencing, roto-tilling and tools, and provide a garden coordinator for technical assistance.

A typical 3,000 – 5,000 square foot vacant lot could be subdivided into 10' x 15' plots and these plots would service 20 – 30 families. From these small plots, laid out to maximize the healthy production of produce desired by the gardener, up to \$500 – \$700 of produce can be produced for a family in one season. The produce goes further than one season, for 75 percent of the gardeners preserve some of their harvest for later consumption. The National Association for Gardening suggests that a one-acre plot can be divided into 40 individual gardening plots measuring 25' x 30'. Seven hundred square feet is considered a national average size for a family of four persons, and this size plot

can keep a family in fresh vegetables much of the summer and even into the winter. A typical high yield 25' x 30' garden plot with succession planting can contain herbs, early leaf and head lettuce, onions, carrots, beets, radishes, green beans, bush peas, broccoli or cabbage, summer squash, corn, cucumbers, tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, swiss chard and many other plant options. For an investment of \$19 in seeds, a \$325 reward in produce is easily obtained.

All this good, nutritious food plus outdoor exercise, therapy and social interaction makes community gardening most desirable. Community gardens are a winner.

A Sampling of Community Gardens

To illustrate how different communities have created community gardens for their neighborhoods, gardens in three different cities were researched. These are Village Homes, a solar energy efficient community in Davis, California; Community Gardens in Sacramento, California, located adjacent to a public

housing development; and Crossroads Community – The Farm, located under and adjacent to the Army Street Freeway Interchange in San Francisco. All offer specific unique solutions to their gardening participants.

Village Homes

Developed by innovative builder/developer Michael Corbett, Village Homes is a 70-acre, 224-unit alternative community designed to conserve resources and maximize community interaction. Davis is a university town and many of Village Home's residents are associated with the University. They are an enlightened group who feel we must conserve our finite resources and live more in harmony with nature. Village Homes is known nationally for its innovative architecture sited and designed to minimize energy consumption. City officials and community leaders have been most receptive and innovative in their pursuit to develop an energy-saving community in this flat, fertile, mild climate, Central Valley city. As Radburn, New Jersey, and Greenbelt, Maryland, were trend setting developments in the earlier decades of the 20th Century, Village Homes is a prototype for the 1980's and the latter part of this century.

Garden areas in Village Homes can be found in three different locations: (1) in the Common Areas located at the rear of the dwelling between the narrow cul-de-sac clustered housing units, (2) in the meandering wide Green Belt Areas sweeping across the subdivision, and (3) in the Agricultural Preserve. Village Homes has had a productive gardening orientation since its preliminary planning stages. Natural grasses and ground covers are designed to enrich the soil and to be drought tolerant. Trees are abundant with fruit such as apples and almonds.

The use of the Common Areas is determined by the residents with homes adjacent to this open space. In these Common Areas are communal gardens



A meandering path through the commons garden provides a perfect bike path for a young Village Homes resident.

and private gardens designed for the residents on adjacent land. Vegetables, food-producing plants and native drought-resistant plants are preferred as landscaping over ornamental plants. Strawberries are ground covers; cabbages, lettuce and carrot greens are preferred over petunias and lobelia. While this plant selection may sound strange, in the Village Homes Common Areas it works and provides a pleasant, attractive landscaped setting.

The Green Belt Area contains natural open-channel surface drainage areas (no off-site drainage was constructed and water seeps naturally on site back into the water table), and trees are planted to form orchards. A vineyard is also included in the Green Belt Area.

The Agricultural Preserve is reserved for homeowner gardening proposals and community residents are offered the first opportunity to purchase agricultural products grown in the Preserve. Rick Sacks, one of the agriculturally trained gardening professionals at Village Homes explains that the Agricultural Preserve proposals are evaluated by the

Agricultural Committee established by the Village Homes Homeowners Association Board of Directors. Proposals including products grown organically, without pesticides, without chemical fertilizers, and which will enrich the soil, are favored by the Agricultural Committee.

Similar to the innovative energy-conserving architecture that has evolved at Village Homes, the evolution of the agricultural gardening program will also be interesting to observe. As the plant materials mature, abundant crops are harvested, and the Homeowners Association develops its policies for food distribution and new gardening directions, the gardening program at Village Homes will provide an interesting laboratory for housing and community development planners concerned with low-density urban development.

River Oaks Community Gardens

Sacramento, California's Housing and Redevelopment Agency provides gardening areas nearby or adjacent to its many housing units. Presently they

operate seven gardens, and each garden has a coordinator to assist local residents. Many of these coordinators are CETA or Senior Employment Service Employees. The gardening program has been operating since April 1975 when it was formulated by Lee Tecklenburg of the University Co-op Extension Service of Sacramento County and the Redevelopment Agency. All of the Agency's community gardens are directed by one overall coordinator, Patricia Dougherty. She meets with the local garden coordinators, orders supplies, finds necessary supplies and works with local community garden organizations. Fencing, water lines, seeds, and tools are provided by the Agency at a minimum fee which ranges from nothing to \$5.00 for participating gardeners. An ethnic survey was done in 1979 and by far the largest percentage of gardening members were Oriental. Two of the Agency's largest gardens had the following family breakdowns:

River Oaks –	Camellia Commons –
150 families	69 families
Chinese 62%	Chinese 62%
Hispanic 12%	White 22%



A gardener and a freeway at River Oaks.

White 11%	Black 9%
East Indian 8%	Hispanic 6%
Black 7%	Filipino 1%

As in most urban gardens, participants are older. (Forty percent of urban gardeners in the U. S. are over 50 years of age.) Local gardening organization involves public meetings, formulating garden rules, establishing hours, taking steps to prevent vandalism, planting programs, maintenance decisions, pot lucks, tours to other gardens, and impromptu meetings to resolve issues when necessary. Another consideration in the Sacramento gardens is that of language communication. One can wander through a garden and not hear a word of English, but when it comes to discussing plants and their growth, hand gestures and simple communication among the gardeners are almost universal. Culturally, the produce raised in a family plot reflects the family's heritage. Along with the Housing and Redevelopment Agency gardening programs are other programs sponsored by local churches, ecology centers, and neighborhood groups.



Yellow mustard flowers provide a setting for a garden discussion.

Crossroads Community – The Farm

South of San Francisco's high rise-towered downtown and under and adjacent to the huge Army Street Interchange is a most unique gardening complex. Urban gardens are only one element at the Farm. Bonnie Sherk, Director of the Farm, explains, "The Farm is a social art work and incorporates the divergent fields of all the arts and literature, education, appropriate technology, community service, public health, the environment, economics, city planning, politics and real estate. It is a vehicle for connecting life scale elements of physical form, spirituality and ideas, all of which are interconnected. The whole Farm is a metaphor for civilization." Chickens, ducks, geese, rabbits, and other animals, along with urban gardens, a theatre, gallery space, a community hall, high speed vehicles on the elevated freeway, old frame buildings, a preschool, visiting classes of school children, lots of people of various ages from the adjacent four ethnically diverse neighborhoods, and the dedicated, wise staff of the Farm make

this complex a most interesting neighborhood community center.

With the cooperation of both private and public organizations, the Farm has pulled together land controlled by the State Department of Transportation (Cal Trans), the City Department of Public Works, Department of Recreation, and land and buildings privately owned. Operating since 1974, the Farm is located on seven acres. Five and a half of these acres were purchased in 1978 by the City Department of Parks and Recreation. The Trust for Public Lands assisted in the purchase, and the land is now in the design process for park development. Low-income neighborhood residents from the Bay View, Mission, Bernal Heights and Potrero Hill districts will benefit from this open space development on land formerly used for industrial purposes. Much discussion between the City Parks and Recreation Department, neighborhood residents and the Farm staff is now occurring to assure that the development of this additional acreage is not just another green park, but a place that will incorporate many of the unique



City kids learn about fowl at the Farm.

design and organizational concepts of the Farm.

The Farm's gardening program includes gardening workshops for neighborhood residents, garden training for preschool and school age children, garden plots for the school class visitors, and further training on how plants, people, animals, air, water, sun, and spaces relate to one another to form a total environment. The emphasis on arts and environmental education at the Farm includes many interrelated elements such as urban gardening and agriculture, livestock management and animal husbandry, nutrition and health care, waste recycling, appropriate technology and energy systems, heat and temperature thermal imaging projects, and plant biology. These programs and the Farm's original concept and organization are readily transferable to other communities.

State Coordination

Besides local gardening programs,

California, like other States, has a special State coordinator for urban and community gardens. Jesse Orta is a special consultant to the California Urban Food Task Force located in the State and Consumer Services Agency in Sacramento. This Task Force has been formed to increase the quality and quantity of food available to inner-city residents. A Survey of Surplus State Lands identifying possible public land sites available for community gardens has been completed. Food availability and distribution is another concern of the Task Force, as is the development of a statewide communication network.

As these State, regional and local community garden program activities expand, more opportunities for people, healthful food, environmental awareness and social interaction will occur. These activities will be good, but an old saying passed down should be remembered: *The more help a man gets in his garden, the less that garden belongs to him.* Being in

your own gardening plot, tending your own plants, and enjoying this outdoor exercise are pleasures enjoyed throughout the centuries.

For more assistance in formulating a Community Gardening program for your neighborhood, the following sources will be helpful:

Crossroads Community – The Farm
1499 Potrero Avenue
San Francisco, Calif. 94110

Gardens for All, Inc.
Shelburne, Vt. 05482

Trust for Public Land
82 Second Street
San Francisco, Calif. 94105

California Urban Food Task Force
State & Consumer Services Agency
1220 N Street, Room 409
Sacramento, Calif. 95814

Village Homes
2310 Portage Bay Avenue
Davis, Calif. 95616

Community Gardens
River Oaks Housing Project
240 Seavey Circle, Sacramento, Calif.
95814

U.S. Department of Interior
HCRS
Pension Building
440 G Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20243

Office of Neighborhood Development
Department of Housing and Urban
Development
Room 3172
Washington, D.C. 20410

Brooklyn Botanic Garden
1000 Washington Avenue
Brooklyn, N.Y. 11225



Cooperative Planning on The U.S.-Mexico Border

How can a planner perform a study on economic input/output, housing supply/demand or traffic origin/destination when observation of each of these factors is cut in half because of the presence of an international border? This is a question faced each day by urban planners responsible for cities along the U.S.-Mexico border. In order to address this problem, this year's activities under the U.S.-Mexico Agreement for Cooperation in Housing and Urban Development have been focused on bringing together planning officials from the two countries and providing them with data to build a basis for ongoing cooperation.

Under the Implementation Plan agreed to on March 24, 1980, by HUD and the Mexican Ministry of Human Settlements and Public Works (SAHOP) the two agencies are sponsoring a series of small technical exchanges in selected border cities. The first two meetings were held in April in Brownsville/Matamoros at the easternmost point of the border and at El Paso/Juarez, which is approximately the mid-point of the 2,000 mile border and the westernmost point in Texas. A third meeting is planned for San Diego/Tijuana at the Pacific coast.

In both meetings, it was agreed that exchange of technical documentation in areas such as transportation planning, demographic data, industrial development, environment and tourism will be carried out by planning officials at the local level. For any projects or proposals for which one side would like agencies or jurisdictions of the other side to provide review or comment, the Joint Steering Committee established under the Agreement will perform the necessary coordination. The two Executive Secretaries to the Committee, Tila Maria de Hancock, Assistant to the Secretary for International Affairs at HUD, and Luis Sanchez de Carmona, Director General for Urban Ecology of SAHOP, are the main points of contact for this coordination.

In addition to these technical-level meetings, the Committee also agreed to hold a larger border-wide meeting later this year at which time officials of both SAHOP and CODEF, the Mexican Commission for Economic Development of the Border Zone, will make a presentation on the most recent directions in their plans and regulations for border development. This should be of particular interest to U.S. border planners in view of recent policy directions being taken by CODEF which may have implications for commercial and industrial development in the U.S.

Since the signing of the Agreement last year, both HUD and SAHOP have been studying the potentials and obstacles to cooperation in planning between the United States and Mexico. The first step was to call together officials involved in planning for the region to two meetings held last fall. At those meetings, it was learned that the greatest obstacles to cooperative planning are the lack of channels of information between officials at the various levels, and differences in planning procedures in the two countries.

One of the most important aspects of planning as it differs between the two countries is in the extent of centralization. In Mexico, all planning is tied to a national system and all plans must be compatible with the National Urban Development Plan prepared by SAHOP.

A second type of complication comes from the difference in jurisdictions between HUD and SAHOP. SAHOP's Undersecretariat of Human Settlements has the responsibility for urban planning at the national and regional levels. It is therefore vested with far more planning authority than any American Federal agency.

On the other hand, SAHOP does not have responsibility for funding housing programs, whether through grants or subsidies, as HUD does. Thus, HUD and SAHOP have many similar interests, but few actual responsibilities in common. This complicates any attempts at cooperation between them.

In order to address the problem of differences of planning procedures between the two countries, the Office of International Affairs is preparing analyses of several of the Mexican planning documents that have been collected and placed in the Foreign Information Retrieval System (HUDFIRS).

The technical exchanges and larger border meeting have been designed to begin expanding the channels of information. In addition, each side has prepared a directory of officials responsible for border planning and a bibliography of border planning documents. These items are available upon request from the Office of International Affairs, HUD Headquarters, Wash., D.C.

Teri Flynn
HUD Office of International Affairs, Wash., D.C.

The Gardener from Savannah

by Melissa Fay Greene



The gardens are extravagant in summer. They surface beside dirt streets and alleys, green and giddy with light, and their stalks tilt amiably in the wind. They collect passersby: women with babies like grocery sacks on their hips chat near the slender corn; old men tip their hats when they bicycle past. At dusk, families on metal porch furniture feel the presence of the gardens, neighborly, and docile as livestock.

Ian Robertson drives a mean-looking 1950 Ford truck with glowering headlights, a silver hood ornament, and a bumper-sticker that says "Bring Back Windmills." When he backfires through neighborhoods with gardens, girls in knee-socks and pigtails chant "Hey, Mr. Robertson!" He pulls alongside porches, and substantial women in aprons lean out of screen doors and speak to him about pie-making. In the winter, grizzly old men with flasks instead of coats for warmth crawl into the cab and ride around town with him, pointing and offering advice. Ian Robertson's wardrobe consists of six pairs of blue-jeans, assorted plaid shirts, work gloves, and a tam o'shanter. If he were craftier, one

might suspect him of harboring plans to transform Savannah, Georgia, into Abilene, Kansas.

On a steamy gray morning in May, Ian works behind the science museum with a crew of emotionally disturbed adults from an outpatient client. They are planting tomatoes. A young man in a trenchcoat steps up to Ian and announces, "This is my first day and I don't know a thing." "Great," says Ian, and they go off together to squat over a row of newly-turned dirt. Another man plows and re-plows the same row all morning; he plows to the end, turns around, and returns up the row, flattening his furrow. His counselor, having absorbed instruction from Ian, cradles a tomato plant and attempts to insert it in the earth. Every time he tries, the patient comes back up the row like a train passing through and eliminates the furrow. Aggravated, the counselor stomps away. The young man works steadily on, content.

Nearby is a greenhouse in which Ian Robertson has installed a solar heating system. Boxes of dirt are prepared for his new project: earthworms. He mail-ordered 200,000 from Florida. They have names like amphetamines: red wrigglers, Louisiana pinks. He believes the mental health patients can care for them easily, enrich the gardening soil, and sell them at a profit. The worms, apparently, are ready, plane tickets in hand; the hold-up is funding. "Comprehensive Mental Health has got to pay for them," says Ian with a sly smile. "And they don't know whether to put them on the budget as supplies or personnel."

More than 120 Savannah families work in plots plowed up by Ian. At the Chatham Association for Retarded Citizens is a basketball court that has been tilled and planted — only the hoops remain of the court, and corn silk the only pom-poms. "I make no excuses for that," says Ian, a trophied soccer and volleyball star. "There were a bunch of people who were

profoundly retarded trying to play basketball. Some of them could barely get their hands to their mouths, let alone a ball to a hoop. But anyone can put a seed in the ground and grow something." In his bedroom, Ian has a portrait of the group, some of whom are in wheelchairs, in front of their basketball court garden; they are holding up their fingers in a team chant: "We're Number ONE!"

In mid-morning, in the pasty downtown heat, Albert Collins surveys the Nicoll Street community garden. Half a dozen families have spread an acre of lavish greenery over a lot formerly strewn with bricks, and garbage. They left planks for benches and a barbecue pit for summer evenings, in the center. Albert Collins' pockets are like saddlebags; his drooping pants are cinched tight under his swollen belly. He is old and hack-toothed. He was born on a farm, but left it to work as a mason and bricklayer for 40 years. "Then I got broke up and crippled," he says. "So I turned an old trick. Went back to farming." When Ian, red-haired and wiry as a fox, arrives to oversee some fence repair, he and Albert Collins and another old man circle the garden. The three of them calculate the years they have been doing this together. Still, every crop is a new blessing. Each of them loops a hand in a pocket and points with the other, spelling out the future harvest: okra, collards, green peas, snap beans, squash, melons, and cane. When Ian leaves, Albert Collins works his way back to the center of the garden where he stands musing in the heat.

Ian, by trade, is a keeper of pigs. He is afraid that people will mistake his conversation about "Large Whites" to be in reference to "red-necks." He speaks with equal authority of Saddleback Sows and Welsh Boars. At school in England he attained the post of Assistant Chief Pig-herder. He subscribes to a book called "All About Pigs: Over 700 Questions Answered," which addresses such issues as how to store swill, how to

encourage a boar who is reluctant to "serve" a female, and how to discourage tail-biting which, the editor observes, likely arises from a sense of frustration and boredom. The book prescribes cures for the treacherous host of afflictions to which the animals are subject, including spotty legs, scabby snouts, saddle sores, belly rash, greasy skins, swollen cheeks, coughing, sneezing, panting, lumps, foot warts, pig pox, purple ears, and hermaphroditism. Raising pigs is a fragile and risky business.

Ian studied pig-raising at agriculture college in Staffordshire, England. At the age of 11 he had failed the national test designed to separate the future professionals from the future laborers. So, at the age of 13, Ian, a scrawny fellow with curly hair, was escorted by his father to the office of a vocational counselor to determine, in light of his miserable test score, his future. The vocational counselor, a hefty cheese-checked man at ease in his cubicle, allowed the boy a chance to express a preference: "What do you like to do?" Quickly, without looking at his father, the kid answered, "I like to be outside."

"Ah yes," said the vocational counselor, removing his glasses and considering that lunch was not, after all, remote. "You will be a farmworker."

Later in the gluey May morning, Ian visits a Golden Age Club. Rattling down the hall with a slide projector and a screen, he is stopped by the soft cooing of high voices: a roomful of blue-haired ladies are singing hymns. He enters, bows his head with them as their recreation director leads the Lord's Prayer, then brusquely sets up his equipment. There are slides of gardens, glistening, green as watermelons. There are close-ups of shiny cucumbers and obese tomatoes, at which the old women murmur and smile. There are slides of proud gardeners wearing sunhats and holding aprons full of okra. "These

people are 60, 65, 80 years old," says Ian. "Your ages. If a few of you started a garden, you could eat out of it all summer. I can help you till it up and lend you the tools. I bet you could teach the children around here some things. They probably think vegetables come out of machines at the back of supermarkets." Some of the women laugh. One, with gray hair in a bun and a curved wood cane, strains to see him through thick watery glasses and smiles uncertainly. "We always had a beautiful garden," she whispers to a companion who is not listening.

Ian hands out his business card to everyone and leaves, smiling and skinny. Outside he walks fast and slams the video equipment into the truck. "I can't stand to see that," he says. "They sit around inside all day saying prayers." Later that day, urging his truck up a hill, it comes to him: "They're not doing a thing except getting ready to die. Those damn things are Death Preparation classes. They probably have guest speakers from funeral homes." He resolves to see vines curl in a nearby field.

In the afternoon, Ian wanders into Yamacraw Village, a vast and dilapidated housing project, with a camera. Shirtless men hang out in second-story windows. Gasoline motors jitterbug the hot air. He visits half a dozen old customers. One woman shrieks when he politely invites her outdoors to pose by her crop. She is old, dressed for an afternoon nap, with a thin towel wrapped around her head. Her teeth are out. Her hand panics about her lips. But Ian has spotted a lovely young thing in the garden: the old woman's scarecrow. Blue aluminum foil suggests the bosom, with a bit of scarf and a windy feather. The long cotton skirt is a wraparound with delicate lace flutings. Ian kneels by the bean plants, which are waving their tiny bud fists in the air, and takes aim: both subjects have composed themselves; they are erect and solemn when he takes the portrait.

Ian and Vicki Robertson, who are in their late twenties, live in three narrow rooms off a cobblestone street in the historic district of downtown Savannah.

By the time Ian met Vicki in London, he had circumnavigated the world and investigated the remnants of the British Empire. He had grown up in Hong Kong and Malta, the son of a telecommunications specialist, and had worked for two years on lush Mindanao, in the Philippines.

They resolved to live in America.

Savannah: laid out in neat squares like farmland, with the drooping archways and cavernous houses of Europe. Marble fountains simmered and bronze soldiers brandished weapons in otherwise tranquil parks. Yet the city, with its clean-swept alleys and badgered slums, lacked mystery. Vicki was homesick.

"It was very irrational," she said. "We'd go out to the Mall to see a movie, and on the way back I'd suddenly start crying. Because of all those lights and garish advertisements, it all seemed so new and anonymous. That kind of strip was everywhere in America."

Ian, too, was overcome by the land, by the vast acres of dirt lying idle, under the heavy hand of owners whose one eye was cocked at their property, the other at their bank books. "Nothing but collateral!" Ian said, fuming, unrealized carrots, radishes and herbs heaping in his mind like a grocery.

Like an ancestral explorer, he began touring. The curly-headed Englishman, straddling a collapsing bicycle, undertook expeditions into the slums. "I rode down every back lane I could find," he said. "It was a hard thing to do because people threw bottles at me. They weren't too receptive to strangers."

Like an ancestral explorer, he discovered land of great wealth. No forests needed uprooting to free the fertile soil, but rather cinderblocks, tin cans, and garbage. Ian

discovered the wealth of the vacant lots. The perception seemed natural to a European: "In England there are 54 million people in an area a third the size of Texas," Ian said. "You're shoulder to shoulder. During the second World War when all food was completely cut off and the U-boats ran England, the government made allotments of land, like the Victory Gardens in America. But there were so many people they had to farm out the sides of railroad tracks, median strips in the middle of roads, and parks in town. In the war time they planted up everything for food."

"We could feed everyone in Savannah using Chatham County," he concluded. "We don't need to bring tomatoes from California."

He was surprised that the poorest areas – with leaning houses, and zigzagging streets, and whole neighborhoods filling like sinks with rainwater – were sitting in the midst of the most land. "All those areas were supposedly economically deprived," he said. "Therefore there was no investment in the area. All the vacant lots were vacant and are going to stay vacant for a long time."

He realized that the people hanging around idly, leaning on porch banisters, watching the afternoon traffic, were often people from the country. They'd moved to the city in search of work and, finding none, they waited. But they had farming skills.

Ian conceived a plan and went looking for money. He found a sponsor, the Wesley Community Center; a funding source, the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries with a project on Hunger in America; a partner, Bradford Allen, then president of the Black Action Group of Savannah State; and he returned to the poor neighborhoods.

They stood, in the scant late afternoon light, like pioneers, raising tools over land grown wild with weeds and pop

bottles. In the growing shadows of a Burger King, they observed West Broad, a liquor street swelling at dusk with smartly-dressed women and paycheck laborers. "My first thought was we'll go into the community and see if we can get somebody to use this hoe," said Ian.

"But on second thought, we haven't got anything to offer." It would have been absurd, knocking at doors like collectors for some charity and pointing to a slab of dirt which people didn't even take shortcuts through anymore. "We can tell people this is going to be a garden," said Ian. "But when you look at it, it doesn't look very likely."

So they dug in alone. It took them five days to rake the surface trash off, but by the time they finished, seven neighbors had stopped by to inquire. "Do you own it?" they'd ask.

"No," said Ian, or Bradford Allen. "But we got permission to use it. We're going to try to grow something here. If you're interested, why don't you take an area like 20 by 30?"

"Shoot, yeah!" they'd say. "But how are you going to plow it?"

"We got a tiller."

"Yeah, all right, I'll take that area over there."

"You could tell that people know which were the best areas," said Ian, "because they all pointed to the same place and we'd have to say, 'Sorry, Mrs. Smith's already taken that one.'"

"So everyone took an area and we loaned tools. We said you can keep the tools at your place, just sign these things saying you got them on loan, and we'll provide seeds if you need them. And we started tilling it up. That was the really hard thing; the tiller was one of those old ones with the engine on top, and when it hit a stone it leaped into the air. The demolition job had been the cheapest possible, which means they just came in

with a bulldozer, and what they couldn't get in the big scoop, they just drove over and left. So there we were with bricks. I've got slides of us moving bricks out.

"From the West Broad lot alone we must have moved 10 or 11 truckloads of house bricks.

"Then we tilled it up, and in the summertime we grew cowpeas. That's where I came in. Everyone wanted to grow everything, and I said, 'Look, we tested this soil and we're not going to grow very much here. It's been under a house for thirty years. We need something that's an easy feeder, something that doesn't take very much out of the soil and perhaps puts something back in. And legumes do that. They put nitrogen in the soil.' So I said, 'Let's go with black-eyed peas.' And people said okay; it was late in the summer and they didn't think anything was going to make it anyhow.

"Well, we made bushels of black-eyed peas. I mean *bushels*. We made 400 pounds of black-eyed peas that first season."

A thick wind is ladled off the highway in the early May evening and pours through the fields below. Two women in housedresses stand amid the haze. The land is green and damp around them, tangled and indolent.

"Tell that man to make you some rows," says the middle-aged woman in fishing boots. "That man will make you some rows." She bears down on the earth with her hoe while the other, wearing pink curlers under a white rainhat, and house slippers looks doubtful and continues to tramp around her friend's plot enviously.

Downfield an old minister and his son hack at the weeds. The young man arches his back and whispers, "I'd rather be playing ball." He smiles innocently at his father across the bean rows. The old man straightens up slowly, nods toward the woman in the rainhat and slippers, and

addresses Ian, "Say, is *she* going to work down here?"

"Yep," says Ian. "When I went by her house and said I was going *whoosh!* she leaped up, pulled on her hat, and came flying out the door. You can't argue with enthusiasm."

"No sir, you can't," says Reverend Pullin, looking sideways at his son. The young man is being nationally courted by college football coaches.

Further downfield, Ian kicks sorrowfully through a cool patch of long grass. "This is my garden," he says incredulously. "It doesn't even *look* like a garden."

The woman in the rainhat hails him from up the field. "When you coming by with that tiller?" He springs toward her. He is always squinting at the sun, polite, and half bashful when he talks to the gardeners. He lingers. But he is pressed by appointments, and keeps a calendar in his truck. The gardens become self-sufficient, autonomous. He feels grandfatherly toward them. At six o'clock Ian leaves the field, kicks through the dirt of the unplanted lots, starts the truck, and digs into the smoky afternoon traffic.

"This here is nutgrass," says the woman in the fishing boots. She displays it like a trout, triumphantly, and flings it, vanquished, toward the bordering woods. Soon there is only the distant mutter of the traffic and the dry cough of the hoe into the dirt. Fat birds seesaw in the bushes. The woman in the rainhat, having found a small stretch that pleases her, rips the grass out by hand. The nearby woods are massive and self-absorbed; rich, chomping, and breeding.

Abbreviated here, this article appeared in the Jan. '80 issue of American Preservation. Ms. Greene is a freelancer from Athens, Ga. While doing this story, she planted her first garden. The okra was "inedible," she reports, but the squash was "more than satisfactory."



***The Tribes of America*, by Paul Cowan. Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday, 1979. 311pp. \$10.95. HUD Library call number: 325.2 C68**

Paul Cowan, a self-proclaimed political radical, states:

"This book represents a seven-year effort to learn more about America and about myself, and to develop a way of writing about my discoveries."

His chapters originally appeared as articles in *The Village Voice* where he has been a reporter for many years. In 1977, and 1978, he revisited the places about which he had written and as he added new information, omitted some material, and reexamined his previous conclusions, the earlier articles were treated as first drafts for this publication.

His subjects and experiences were varied. He visited truck stops and rode with drivers during a strike by independent truckers when our highways became battlefields patrolled by vigilantes. For his piece on migrant workers, he went to Philadelphia and was recruited as a day laborer to pick fruits and vegetables in the fields of southern New Jersey. The year was 1973, and the workers endured deplorable conditions for earnings that were well below the minimum wage. He saw firsthand the life these people were forced to live. They were members of "a caste-tribe- of untouchables in the lower depths of American labor."

In 1974, he observed a coal miners' strike in Harlan County, Kentucky. After living ten days with one of the strike leaders and his family, Cowan described the miners as the lost tribe of the working class, isolated and helpless in their fight for better wages and improved health and safety measures.

After his interviews for the chapter "Jews Without Money," Cowan realized that the poverty he had seen among the poor living on New York City's Lower East Side compared with the poverty he had seen any place else in America. The elderly residents he saw as "old people lost here in America" who felt themselves deserted by liberal Jewish politicians and intellectuals who demonstrated more concern for blacks and hispanics than for the inhabitants of the Jewish slums.

While most of his portraits served as bitter reminders of the extent to which the less fortunate in our society have been abandoned, or at least ignored, his visits with illegal aliens near El Paso showed him why millions of people still see America as the promised land.

Other chapters are concerned with local battles over textbooks in West Virginia, busing in Boston, a housing project in New York. While researching these stories, Cowan found himself more deeply involved with human beings and less with abstract issues — and discovered his sympathies divided:

"I found that, often, people I might once have written off as reactionaries were fighting to preserve their culture and their psychological and physical turf. It became clear to me that those social conflicts could not be understood purely in ideological terms. Clearly, they were tribal struggles, too."

Often these conflicts were between groups who shared no common bond of understanding but only common stereotypes and mutual resentments. Fear was present to such a degree, sometimes backed up by actual experiences, that reason and compassion became impossible. And the policies of those in authority were just examples of the arrogance of power, even though their intentions may have been benign.

In addition to being an activist, the author is also an optimist who has always felt that change and improvements in society were possible. But his years of travel to the trouble spots of our country have not encouraged him.

"*The Tribes of America* is a metaphor for my way of seeing this country. And it is a political statement. I was raised to believe that the United States is a melting pot, and since I'm a confirmed racial, sexual, and cultural integrationist, I'd still like to think that was true. But I don't. The last seven years have convinced me that the melting pot — with its dream of a single, unified America — is largely a myth. We are unified during times of crisis. . . . We're united as consumers. We vote in the same national elections. We have a mass culture in common. . . . But, to an unrecognized extent, we're a nation of professional, religious, ethnic, and racial tribes — the Tribes of America — who maintain a fragile truce, easily and often broken."

Cecily Wood
HUD Acquisitions Librarian
Wash., D.C.

Notice of Publication

***A Tale of Five Cities: Life in Europe Today*, by John Ardagh. New York, Harper & Row, 1979. 455pp. \$15.95. A Tale of Five Cities focuses on four cities of the European Economic Community (EEC). The author has chosen medium-sized cities of 500,000 — 800,000 (with suburbs) that have industry, a university and a varied cultural life. All of them are just large enough to begin to feel the stresses of modern urban living.**

Neighborhoods: A Self-Help Sampler

by Alice Shabecoff

A major Federal publication about neighborhood self-help.

A major tool in turning the President's concept of "partnership" from theory into reality.

A book that will inspire people to try self-help — and show them how to do it. These were the goals that motivated the creation of the book.

Neighborhoods: A Self-Help Sampler

Work on this sampler was one of the first tasks of the newly created Office of Neighborhood Development, an office set up under Assistant Secretary Geno C. Baroni's Office of Neighborhoods, Voluntary Associations and Consumer Protection. The office supports neighborhood groups engaged in self-help revitalization, through grants, training and information assistance.

Neighborhoods: A Self-Help Sampler tells the story of what people across the country have done to revitalize their communities. The major part of the book consists of interviews with members of self-help groups, who describe in their own words what they have done, why and how. The 19 projects chosen for the book represent the economic, geographic, racial and demographic diversity of our Nation and of neighborhood self-help efforts.

Following each narrative is a step-by-step section which can help readers replicate the same kind of project in their communities. At the end of the book, there are appendices that offer back-up information including mini fact sheets on the neighborhood-oriented programs of the Federal Government, a resource directory of organizations that can provide technical assistance, and an annotated bibliography.

The narratives are intended to bring real



TOP — Banana Kelly Improvement Association, Bronx, N.Y.

LEFT — Home Maintenance Corp., New Haven, Conn., tool library

people and places alive. There is the Banana Kelly Community Improvement Association, in the Bronx. The members live on the five-block-long Kelly Street, which is curved like a banana. "We ran block parties, street clean-ups, lot clean-ups. We fixed up a lot into a community garden and now we harvest vegetables from it," says Harry Derienzo, the association's

*BELOW – Neighborhood planning,
PATCH, Inc., Atlanta, Ga.
RIGHT – Vest pocket park, Unidad y
Progreso, Brooklyn, N.Y.*



director. "We refused to allow the city to tear down any buildings on our block. We went into the buildings and with absolutely no funds, we began the gutting process." The group got technical assistance from another New York self-help organization, the People's Development Corporation. By now, they are close to finishing three buildings through sweat equity homesteading, and the buildings are theirs, under co-op ownership. They have a greenhouse, manage 200 units of housing, have weatherized 35 units, operate a maintenance service, and with a HUD grant have installed solar collectors in their buildings.

In Barwick, Kentucky, before the community canning co-op was set up, all the people had was poverty. "You know how it is, poverty is like a piece of tough meat: the longer you chew it, the bigger it gets," says Nancy Cole, a Barwick resident. "But the important thing about us isn't our poverty, but what we are doing about it."

Mrs. Cole was the force that got people together in meetings, "six whole years, talking about making things better." Then \$500 in contributions came to Barwick because of a Louisville newspaper article about its poverty. "The \$500 made me think. What if I did buy food and clothing with it? The food would get eaten and the clothes would wear out, and what difference would that make to Barwick? Instead I bought seeds and fertilizers and hoes. And the people worked the ground with the hoes and they made gardens. That was the beginning of our co-op." With that beginning, the group was able to obtain \$10,000 from the Presbyterian Church. They bought a tractor, a tiller, more seeds, more hoes, some canners, and a supply of jars. Then they got to building houses. "Everybody worked; everybody helped. We taught each other to build because none of us had building skills. Today we have twenty new houses in Barwick."

In Atlanta, a group called Exodus grew from a storefront center teaching job skills

to high school drop-outs, to a large scale force for community revitalization and youth employment. They built a partnership that brings together the city (which lets them use the city training facilities to train staff), a nonprofit Atlanta design center (which supervises the people who teach the youth how to repair homes), the Department of Labor (which gave money to hire the trainees), and HUD (which gave boarded-up houses and runs the youth conservation demonstration program).

"I think we've come a long way," Exodus' director David Lewis feels. "It's remarkable to see kids who were unemployed in April and May now on top of houses putting down a roof — a damned-near perfect roof. In no time these kids have learned to do that, and the effect on the community is phenomenal because these kids come from this community. The people see neighborhood youths doing something constructive. It just gives you hope."

Among the 16 other narratives are an agency in Oakland that helps elderly immigrants from China find homes and jobs; a town of 200 people in David, Kentucky, that formed itself into a corporation and bought itself from a developer after the coal mine shut down; a neighborhood in Madison that turned itself from a commuter corridor into a thriving place to live; the Home Maintenance Corporation of New Haven that grew from a tool lending library to a total housing service organization; an Hispanic group in Brooklyn that turned a waterfront lot into a park and playground, using discarded materials and kids' labor.

The stories demonstrate vividly how people's energies and commitment can be joined in partnership with private businesses, with church groups, with foundations, and with Federal and local governments, to bring about significant and lasting changes in villages, towns and cities.

Long Range Benefits

The creation of the book turned out to involve its own set of partners. As a new staff, those of us who worked on the book learned from the book. The information we dug out and organized for the book became a resource for the office, which we put to use in helping groups who contacted us in ever increasing numbers, asking for help in neighborhood revitalization strategies. As we cast a net around the country, looking for representative projects to highlight in the sampler, we found hundreds of groups who asked to participate in the network our office was forming.

The narratives in the sampler are edited from long interviews held by our researcher, who was accompanied by a photographer. The photos reveal the community and its residents better than words.

But an interview cannot uncover the complex web of actions that must be taken to accomplish a self-help goal. Because of this, we found we had to seek out further expertise for this material. As a result, the how-to sections following each narrative were written by experts in each subject area.

Then the sampler, in draft manuscript, was reviewed by neighborhood group members, who brainstormed with us about ways to improve the book.

The end product is a publication that supports and celebrates the significance and legitimacy of self-help as an element in the partnership that makes the revitalization of our Nation's communities possible.

The sampler is now available from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. The price is \$5.50 a copy; stock number 023-000-00559-0.

Ms. Shabecoff is director of the Neighborhood Information Division, Office of Neighborhoods, Voluntary Associations and Consumer Protection, HUD.

Appreciating Greenville's (S.C.) Elderly

by Barbara Taggart

The establishment of a community service program for elderly residents in today's public housing projects must be based on a clear understanding that there are two major types of elderly groups — the "young elderly," who have retired from the paid work force but not from life, and the "elderly elderly," who may be young at heart, but know the aging process is beginning to make a difference in how they perceive and respond (physically and emotionally) to their environment.

In addition to understanding the needs of the elderly, depending on where they are in the young elderly/elderly elderly continuum, it is important to overcome the typical misconception that most elderly, low- and moderate-income elderly in particular, are primarily preoccupied with survival. They not only desire affordable shelter, but an environment that is safe, secure, and cheerful. This environment must also allow them to respond to their decreasing mobility with compensatory supports so that adaptation can be made with grace and ease.

Each elderly person is a unique individual with life's ambiguities, disappointments, joys, and passions.



Gardening

When Scott Towers, a 14 story high-rise for the elderly, was opened in 1973, a basic philosophy was established which would serve not only to ease the transition to "high rise living" (a totally new experience for almost everyone) but, also build a support system which would be responsive to resident needs and interests. Many of the residents themselves and a wide variety of community friends and organizations have contributed to the activities and services available to residents. Programs change from year to year, but several have had real staying power.

One project that has been particularly successful is the garden plot project. Through the cooperation of Furman University (which owns the land) and the Greenville Kiwanis Club (which provides seeds, plants and manpower for plowing and fertilizing) residents become "city farmers." After the land is prepared and sectioned off in 10 x 20 foot plots, lots are drawn for assignments and from then on, the farmers are on their own.

Harvest time is exciting and rewarding and the monthly pot luck luncheons provide a fun time to share home canned beans or pickles and do a bit of bragging. The greatest reward of all is the psychological lift of being productive and the pleasure of returning to the soil.

Farming is not everyone's cup of tea, but "Sip and Sup" might be. Tea tasting and exotic fruit drinks are available on a weekly basis in the Community Room to provide a social opportunity, new experience, and to emphasize proper nutrition in a most palatable way.

Opportunities to learn new skills and to develop competence are provided through weekly craft workshops. As the time approaches for the annual Christmas bazaar, interest at the workshop is maintained at a rather feverish pitch. The bazaar, even with all the accompanying hard work, offers a day of festivities, a time to display one's talents and an opportunity to turn a small profit on one's efforts. Many seasonal and practical gift items are created, but the most popular handicraft is always ceramics. An in-house kiln adds to the excitement and ease of firing and a discarded haberdasher's display case provides a safe and attractive setting for items before they are sold or passed along to grandchildren to become family heirlooms.

The spiritual life of the community is nurtured and supported through a weekly vesper service arranged through the Greater Greenville Ministerial Alliance. In addition, a volunteer chaplain is "on call" and is regularly available to residents who drop by for a friendly chat or a private conference to work through a troubling moment.

Grocery Shopping

One need identified several years ago was for transportation to the supermarket, and assistance in shopping and in managing the grocery sacks. Sharing this concern with P.L.E.A. (Piedmont Life Enrichment Agency) brought a new service to the housing projects. Local area churches supply the buses and drivers; students supply the muscle; and everyone has a great time on the semi-monthly shopping trips. Assistance is provided for anyone needing help in identifying sizes, weights, or "best buys." As each person clears the



check-out counter, his or her grocery bags are clearly identified by project or apartment. Everyone can shop at leisure knowing that upon returning home there will be no need to wrestle with groceries.

This program is a real social outing – the bus ride itself is fun and friendships between residents in various projects are established and renewed. Although the option is always open to shop at a different supermarket, the consensus is always in favor of returning to the same store where it is easy to shop because "I know where everything is" and where the employees are "patient and kind to us old folks." It should be noted that when this program was initiated, a short training session was arranged with the store manager for all personnel to anticipate any problems which might arise in serving a large group of persons with limited mobility. It was also important to sensitize the employees to the particular needs and attitudes of the elderly. Group shopping has been so successful that the program has expanded to provide special trips to the shopping malls and for going out for dinner.

Many program successes in the projects happen as the result of the efforts of the tenant associations. Elderly residents who have had leadership experience in church or civic organizations, and who have more flexible schedules have provided expertise, vision and enthusiasm to these associations.

Lullwater Homes

Lullwater Homes is a multifamily project with 100 families and about 20 "seniors." The "seniors" single-handedly raised enough money to purchase a piano and draperies for the community room; sponsor an annual Christmas party for all the children (with individually wrapped gifts for everyone); and prepare a Christmas dinner for all the senior citizens and shut-ins who live at Lullwater Homes.

The senior citizens at Fieldcrest Village also sponsor an annual Christmas dinner to which they invite the other senior citizen clubs in the community. Fellowship abounds, but so do beautiful ladies who plan all year to look their very best at the formal occasion.



In addition to existing volunteer resources, sometimes more extensive services become available through the efforts of other social service agencies.

One such program is the Council on Aging's federally-funded Congregate Meals program contracted for locally by the Greenville Urban Ministry.

Project community facilities are used as dining sites for residents over 60. In addition to enjoying a hot nutritious meal each day, participants also receive mandated supplementary services in the areas of health, education, and recreation. One particularly active group decided to add another dimension to the programs and initiated several service projects. The new kitchen curtains which they made and the furniture which they donated brought a real homelike ambience to the dining room. They have also helped with the parties for project children on various holidays throughout the year.



Another federally-funded program which has brought extended benefits to the participants and housing residents is a special CETA project for persons 55 years and older who meet the poverty guidelines

and who can work 20 hours a week. Elderly residents enrolled in the program provide extra support services to their elderly neighbors, enabling them to remain in their homes. They baby-sit for young mothers attending adult education classes. They give piano lessons and sponsor recitals for project youth, assist in the nutrition dining sites, and manage the resale shop (a service for project residents which allows for clothing exchange or purchase at a very modest fee). All profits are returned to the residents through social and recreational activities.

Adult Day Care

In keeping with the commitment of the Greenville Housing Authority to seek the fullest utilization of community resources on behalf of GHA residents, the community rooms at Woodland Homes have doubled as an adult day care center for the past 6 years. This program was originally funded as a pilot project of the Council on Aging and is now funded through Title XX with the local match



provided by the contracting agency, the Greenville Urban League. The Day Care Center is an alternative to nursing home care for elderly clients needing minimum supervision, thus enabling them to continue to live independently. The center is open from 8 until 5, and provides breakfast, a hot lunch and afternoon snack. Services include medical screening

and support, assistance with handling personal finances, informational programs, and the opportunity for clients to participate in social, recreational, and cultural activities and events.

After years of experience in working with elderly residents in Greenville's public housing projects, it is clear that planning for services must begin with a real appreciation of the elderly themselves.



Just as significant is the fact that their personalities, talents and leadership abilities will be the basis for the success of any program developed for them. The elderly are possibly the most underutilized resource in this country today. Once their enthusiasm and support are catalyzed, other resources from churches and volunteer associations can be molded with their assistance into helpful, fulfilling programs for them. The Greenville Housing Authority's experience also indicates that these volunteer associations are ready and willing to do their part.

Ms. Taggart is Director of Housing Services, Greenville Housing Authority, Greenville, South Carolina.



Twenty-nine awards for excellence and innovation in the design of HUD-supported projects were presented in April. The awards ceremony in New Orleans took place before a gathering of top design specialists and community leaders. The winning design projects were selected from over 350 entries received from 39 States, Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia and Micronesia.

Janet Gabriel Roche, Director of the Berkeley, Calif., Housing and Development Department, has been designated Deputy Assistant Secretary for Public Housing and Indian Programs at HUD.

A year-long study of 2000 neighborhood self-help groups across the Nation has found many with sophisticated skills who are implementing sound projects and creating healthy neighborhoods. The study also shows the local groups could speed revitalization of cities with more support from the private sector and national institutions. The study was conducted by the New World Foundation and HUD's Office of Public/Private Partnerships, which was recently established to encourage and support collaborative efforts between government, private business and neighborhood sectors. Such efforts would serve to advance the partnerships thrust of the Carter Urban Policy.

Boston attorney Gershon M. Ratner was recently appointed HUD Associate General Counsel (Litigation). HUD Secretary Moon Landrieu said Ratner will deal primarily with the Department's "Most significant law suits." He will have dual responsibilities for coordinating all of the Department's litigation within HUD and serving as principal officer responsible for coordinating HUD's litigation with the Department of Justice.

In an effort to cut the cost of housing construction HUD is participating in a demonstration project that will be conducted in four areas of the country. The demonstration, which was announced by HUD and the President's inflation advisor Alfred E. Kahn, is aimed at reducing housing costs through modifying local government regulations and shortening processing time. According to HUD Secretary Landrieu, the demonstration will focus on zoning ordinances, subdivision regulations and building codes.

More cities are turning to solar and other renewable resources, according to the Local Government Funding Report of the Government Information Services.

In Tuscaloosa, Ala., the city has developed an energy systems plan which features a conservation project for city hall, vehicle and traffic management, an oil recovery program, and an energy-from-refuse study. Funding from the city, the Alabama Energy Management Board, and CETA in the form of one worker.

• Fremont, Calif., now uses solar hot water and space heating in a fire station and a senior citizens' center. Funding comes from HUD's community development grants and the city.

• The tax board of Harford County, Md., allows residents to take a 100 percent credit on investments in solar space-heating and cooling for both residential and commercial buildings.

• In Boise, Idaho, a geothermal system will enable the Warm Springs Water District to serve an additional 500 homes, while the city will construct a system to serve downtown businesses, and the State will retrofit buildings in the Capitol Mall to use geothermal energy. The Department of Energy (DOE) has contributed \$6 million to the project.

• The Cross City, Fla., Correctional Institution has enrolled inmates in a vocational training class in solar water heating. DOE has contributed a small grant for textbooks and other materials.

• The Richmond, Ind., City Energy Dept. has initiated programs to provide energy audits for homeowners and commercial building owners, compiled an inventory of natural resources that included aquifers, wind patterns, solar sites and biomass resources, and started a carpooling program and organized two energy interest groups. DOE spent \$137,000 for the projects under its Comprehensive Community Energy Management Program.

• The city of Miamisburg, Ohio, Recreation and Parks Dept. constructed the largest working salt-gradient pond in the country. The thermal energy stored in the facility will supply heat to a swimming pool in summer and to a recreation building in winter. DOE and the city both provided funding.

• Another Ohio city, Middletown, began its energy planning with an aerial, infra-red survey of home heat loss, which prompted 3,800 information requests from the citizens. A university intern, CETA employees and housing inspectors all helped with interpretation of the photos.

• The Cheyenne Community Greenhouse in Wyoming teaches residents about the feasibility of solar technology while providing food and employment to the city's low-income, handicapped and elderly citizens. CETA workers, volunteers, Community Services Administration (CSA) and local funds were used to build what is now the country's largest solar greenhouse.

These are among 2,000 State and local projects that were surveyed by the Washington-based Center for Renewable Resources in an attempt to document current trends toward solar and other renewable fuels.

Model Living Arrangements for the Elderly

by Delores S. Brewster

California, long known for its imaginative lifestyles, has become the home of an innovative type of living arrangement for the frail elderly in one San Francisco neighborhood. These functionally dependent senior citizens of the Chinatown-North Beach area are participants in a unique program of specialized housing which allows them to remain in their community (an area where there is no residential care facility) even when they can no longer live alone.

Under the auspices of On Lok Senior Health Services, groups of three or four elderly live communally in apartments or flats with a companion to assist them with minimal daily living activities. They share expenses, rooms and companionship during the evening hours. Their days are spent at On Lok's neighborhood day health centers where total health and social services are available.

On Lok is a model continuum of care program, funded through HEW's Administration On Aging, which serves a diverse urban population of 65,000, 14 percent of whom are over 65 years old. Included in the area is the largest Chinese community in the United States. Also part of On Lok's jurisdiction of 4 square miles (about one-tenth of the area of the city



and county of San Francisco) is much of the downtown; North Beach, an old Italian community; wealthy Nob Hill; Polk Gulch, largely populated by the city's gays; bawdy Broadway with its topless clubs and red light district; and Fisherman's Wharf, a well-known tourist area on the Bay.

With the exception of the grand old homes and apartments of Nob Hill, the housing available in the On Lok catchment area consists primarily of rooms in cheap hotels and small apartments or rooms above shops. It is in the latter that many of the elderly of the area have spent most of their lives. When they develop the chronic illnesses and frailties of old age, they are often forced prematurely and inappropriately into institutions in distant communities because they are no longer able to function in their lifelong housing with its inadequate plumbing, lack of cooking facilities, steep stairs and inoperable elevators.

However, On Lok has found that the elderly want to remain in the community where their native languages are spoken, their ethnic foods are available and the surroundings are familiar. The situation is not unique to San Francisco and On Lok — it can be found among many of the dependent elderly in many of the Nation's central cities. The history of On Lok's solution to the problem is unique.

From its inception in 1972, On Lok knew that in addition to health care and social service it would need to provide safe adequate housing for some of its participants as an integral part of their long-term care. A variety of housing experiments was tried. A short history of these projects will demonstrate the evolution of the current solution, communal apartments or flats which are used both as permanent homes and interim facilities.

A first experience, which ultimately proved unsatisfactory, was the contractual arrangement made with a neighborhood social service agency for rooms for a group of participants and an attendant. All health and health-related services were provided by On Lok at their neighborhood day health centers. Due to problems encountered when it was discovered that On Lok and the contracting agency held different expectations about the arrangements, 15 months following its opening, the project was terminated.

A second attempt was made to find a building in crowded Chinatown-North Beach, but high costs and the tight housing situation prevented this project from being realized. At this point, On Lok made its first effort to locate flats or apartments where the frail elderly could live together with an attendant, traveling to the day health centers for health and social services.

Other Hurdles

While the physical barriers (steep stairs in buildings without working elevators) eliminated many otherwise suitable sites, cost and reluctance of landlords to rent to the frail elderly were even more prohibitive.

Some landlords refused to rent flats to On Lok participants because they felt it would give their building the image of an "old folks" home. Others exhibited a prejudice against the old because they saw them as senile, cranky, unhappy and unclean. A few refused because of their genuine concern that they would feel responsible should anything happen to their elderly tenants.

On Lok persisted, and in 1974 a flat was found and arrangements made for four to six males to live together with one male aide. These men were frail not to the point of requiring institutionalization, but incapable of living independently. The aide was engaged to run the housing unit, providing 24 hour supervision and some assistance. For all medical care and other services, including laundry, personal care and most meals, the participants were transported to an On Lok day health center.

During the nearly 2 years this arrangement was in effect, the participants and the aide moved several times due to termination of the rental agreement by the landlords. In each case, problems, often the same as those cited by the landlords who had refused to rent to On Lok, developed, and the landlord would cancel the agreement.

An even more serious problem arising from the situation was the unwillingness of the companion to provide the small amount of care occasionally necessary for some of the participants. Most of this assistance could be and was provided at On Lok's day health centers. It was this aspect of the program with which the aide was uncomfortable. Following the move from the third flat, On Lok decided to abandon attempts at providing this type of supervised housing.

A short and unsatisfactory experiment with outside board and care arrangements followed as On Lok continued to try to meet housing needs.

In 1977 On Lok again decided to attempt communal apartment living for some of its participants. This time, however, the situation evolved in a more natural way when a woman living in the On Lok service area became interested in working part time with the project. When an apartment in her building became available, several participants were moved in and the aide provided some supervision and assistance. She was supervised by On Lok. The strong caring attitude of the aide proved to be the key to the success of this second attempt. As a result, when a second apartment became available in the building, another group was formed and assisted by the same woman.

Success Has Followed

On Lok has continued to successfully operate communal living arrangements like these for some of its participants since that time. Presently over a dozen

people reside in four supervised flats.

Each morning they are transported by the On Lok van or they walk to a day health center where a complete range of services — everything from meals, personal care and laundry services to medical care and social services — is available. By late afternoon they return to their apartments where the aide assists them with the evening meal (usually prepared and sent from an On Lok center). The aide also spends time helping the residents prepare for bed, as well as encouraging them to socialize with each other.

In the near future, On Lok will open a congregate housing facility of its own, "On Lok House," constructed with a \$2.9 million loan from HUD, but this does not mean the phasing out of the communal apartments. "On Lok House," with its modern apartments and elevators and a day health center on the first floor, will be ideal for the physically handicapped; while the communal apartments and flats will be reversed for those who need the close personal interaction with other residents and supervision by a warm friendly companion.

Ms. Brewster is a special assistant at the On Lok Senior Health Services, San Francisco.

What We've Forgotten

by Annette Anderson

This article appeared in the Spring 1980 issue of SOUTHERN EXPOSURE, the quarterly journal of the Institute for Southern Studies. This issue of the journal introduced publication of "Building South," a special report on Southern builders, housing, architecture, developers and contractors.

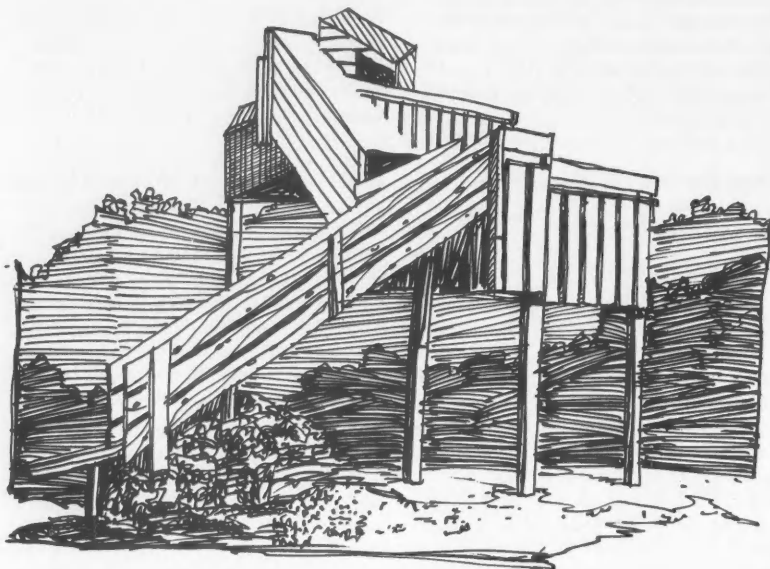
Our great-grandparents built their own farms and towns, certainly their own homes. Most of the Southern buildings which we now look to as our best examples of architecture and city planning were designed as well as built by farmers, carpenters, merchants and ship builders.

On the other hand, few community groups today can build even a small playground for their neighborhood without a grant, an organizational structure and professional design assistance. It seems that most people do not really know how a retaining wall will affect water run-off, that a telephone pole stuck in the ground a couple of feet will topple, that unprotected pipes will freeze, that wooden beams have a limited span.

Why is it that 200 years after ordinary people designed and built towns, plantations and fine homes across the South, most people need design assistance to build a good small clinic or playground?

Quite a few things about the way we live have changed in the past several generations. These changes help explain why people became more dependent on outside, professional experience.

Personal Experience: Most men 200 years ago knew how to build. Few became adults without working on the construction of a house, a barn, a ship or



In 1972, a half dozen people in the Mechanicsville neighborhood of Knoxville asked the East Tennessee Community Design Center to help them design, find resources for and build this small playstructure. Over the next several years, the Design Center consulted on many Mechanicsville projects, including a grassroots land use plan, housing rehabilitation, successful opposition to an expressway and a major street extension and a community center. These projects also contributed to the formation of an active umbrella community organization, Advocates for Neighborhood Development, and gave residents frequent experiences lobbying city officials. Four years after the playstructure had been built, Mechanicsville became the home of Malcolm-Martin Park, the first major

inner-city park built in Knoxville in over 50 years. The proposal, cost estimates and supporting information for this park were supplied by a committee of now design-knowledgeable Mechanicsville residents, led by a loading dock foreman who has since become a County Squire and member of Knoxville's Metropolitan Planning Commission. Annette Anderson says: "Improvements have taken place slowly but surely in Mechanicsville because neighborhood leaders have become their own planning advocates. They, not Design Center consultants, present their plans and proposals to public agencies. They ask for assistance when it is needed but more and more they do not need it, and the time has long passed when they would ask the Design Center to 'draw up a plan for us.'"

a cupboard. Construction materials were few and simple and the characteristics of the materials and the methods of joining them were common knowledge. People also knew from personal experience the difference between ordinary construction and good workmanship, and they respected the experience and care that craftsmanship demands.

Most people also knew about land. From farming or gardening, they knew how soils differ and what kinds of soils and slopes drain well and how erosion and ponding happen. They knew from experience how to make use of soils, slope, sun and shade. Personal knowledge and experience with simple building and land development gave people confidence in their ability to design and build their own environment.

Scale and Speed: As individuals and as a society, we have so increased the scale and speed of our activities that we have stopped observing and understanding our environment. Two hundred years ago, most people were pedestrians most of the time. People *see* more as pedestrians than as drivers, and seeing more means observing more and caring more. Walkers experience at first hand the effects of sun and wind, enclosure by buildings or exposure in open spaces, hills and ridges and valleys.

Cities have grown in scale as well as speed. We are unaware of the quality of design of our cities now because most of us see closely only very small parts of the city in which we live or work or shop. We drive so quickly through them and from one to the other that we do not see what is in between.

The rate of change in the environment also affects our ability to observe how activities are related and how we are affected by the physical environment. The vacant lot with the big oak tree at the subdivision entrance is replaced by a fast-food outlet before the new homeowner is

aware of its importance. Fields disappear before anyone realizes how pleasant they made the drive home. Somehow we may realize that the success of a drug store is related to the business of the laundromat next door, but both move in and out so fast that the observation never registers as a piece of planning information.

Intelligent observation is the primary prerequisite to overcoming the barriers imposed by scale and speed.

Efficiency and Specialization: America pushes people toward producing more and having more as cheaply and efficiently as possible. The drive for production and efficiency leads us to radically new and complex building, transportation, utility, communications and administrative systems. For most people, the major impact of rapid technological change has been a profound feeling of helplessness in an environment that seems entirely out of control. People who have the knowledge and power to control anything are likely to be very specialized and as uncertain as anyone else about what should be done about problems outside their areas of specialization. A Ph.D. and a plumber are equally unable to design a pleasant park or even to choose an appropriate tree for the front yard. The traffic engineer designs our streets, the recreation specialist our parks, the architect our schools, the builder our houses, the planner our neighborhoods. The effect can be paralyzing if we conclude that all information is specialized and that every problem can be solved only by experts. We do not trust our common sense in anything.

Dependency: The major reason why people once designed and built their own communities and eventually did it well is that they had to. People on the frontier had to learn from their mistakes and try again. There were no experts around to call in and no outsiders to blame. An effect of specialization is the feeling that someone else — usually the

government — is responsible for each individual or group getting its share of society's benefits. The feeling may be justified in terms of equity, but it discourages the initiative and individual risk-taking which can lead to undertaking a design effort on a do-it-yourself basis.

Taking Control Back

Many of the things we have lost or had taken away from us over the years can be remedied with the sensitive help of a community-minded design center staffed by professionals, students and community men and women. It can encourage full participation of local people in designing their own structures; provide the framework for citizens to slow down, observe and analyze; and overcome the tendency for us to "let someone else" take care of our problems.

The East Tennessee Community Design Center has served many of these functions since its creation in 1970. Through the nonprofit center, designers contribute professional time and skills to grassroots community projects — neighborhood rehabilitation, playgrounds, rural health clinics, day care centers, converting old buildings to new uses. Clients, architects, planners, VISTAs and students work together to solve building and design problems to meet the client's needs. Community Design Center's program has provided free planning and design assistance to over 100 community organizations in Knoxville and 16 surrounding counties.

Most of the work is done by volunteers. Professional people in the community last year contributed \$75,000 worth of time to help organizations develop both projects and effectiveness. The professionals made valuable time, skills and experience available through the enthusiastic and dedicated cooperation of VISTAs and students.

Design center projects vary with the interests of community organizations and

the skills of the designers. A lighting engineer helps a neighborhood club light a little league ball field. A planner works with several neighborhoods to develop a grassroots community plan and a strategy to obtain city adoption of it. An architect helps a rural community convert an abandoned grocery store into a health clinic. An interior designer finds ways to make more effective use of space in a small neighborhood center.

Whatever the kind of project and the kind of skills it requires, the basic ingredients of a design center project stay about the same:

- A community organization demonstrates a *need*: it shows that it cannot obtain sufficient assistance through private consultants or public agencies; that the proposed project is of general neighborhood or community interest; and that there are reasonable prospects of success.
- The design center coordinator assembles a *task force* responsible for completing the design work requested by the community organization. Each task force consists of a core group of three people: a professional designer, a VISTA or pre-professional student and a representative of the client.
- The design center tries to make participation an active instead of a responsive process. Ideally, designer and client *share responsibility* for the whole design process and for the final outcome of the process. We emphasize that we are not a group of "experts" who draw up plans for other people. But the idea of shared responsibility is a hard principle to follow.

Community groups, like the rest of us, have their own work to do. They would rather not bother with arranging work sessions with children to help the architect find out what the kids want in a park. Taking inventory of neighborhood building skills and materials sources is tedious and time-consuming. They want to say, "Just draw us up a plan." And too

often, architects agree. Commitment to shared responsibility is hard to stick by when it is translated into long meetings, arguments, delays and personal conflicts. Nevertheless, the success of a design center project depends on the level of personal investment and involvement in design by the project's users.

- To share equally in responsibility for the outcome, the participants must *learn from each other*. One of the things community people learn by working with design professionals is that a designer's most important skills do not involve drawing or structural information, data or materials. They learn that important design decisions are based on things like how water flows on a piece of land, how people move around in a building, how sun and shade and wind work, where people sit in a park. They learn that city planning is based on observing and analyzing. One of my most rewarding experiences over the years was hearing an elderly woman who lived in public housing explain to the mayor how to read the topographic map we were using in a presentation.

Designers, on the other hand, become better designers by the insights they gain in listening to and working with the people who will use the structures. They learn that the political system does not work equally well for everyone. They learn to respect the commitment of people who attend task force meetings and community meetings, get out mailings, sit through city council meetings and try to cope at the same time with serious problems of paying the rent.

- Working through a design center task force brings all participants into a *political process*. The first contact between a community organization and a city official may be made by an architect familiar with the politician; later contacts are made directly. Developing skills and confidence for dealing with the bureaucracy may be the most important spinoff of design center projects.

The obstacles to doing it ourselves – political, economic, historical, educational – are immense. Until the time comes when all community groups have the responsibility, ability and confidence it takes to plan and design for themselves, design centers will be an effective mechanism for helping people help themselves. By making us observers first, and designers, eventually, of our own community environments, design centers lead us towards taking control of our own lives.

Annette Anderson is the director of the East Tennessee Community Design Center.

Individual issues in the series are available for \$4.00 from the Institute for Southern Studies, P.O. Box 531, Durham, N.C. 27702.

Community Design Centers in the South

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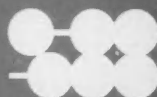
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Lines & Numbers



1978 HUD Statistical Yearbook

The recently published 1978 yearbook provides tabular information on HUD program activities during the 1978 calendar year as well as historical data from the inception of the programs. Financial information, including the status of the Insurance Funds, is provided for fiscal year 1978. Program activities are shown by State distribution and are grouped under the responsible departmental organization. In addition to HUD activities, those of other Federal agencies and the private sector relating to housing, construction, finances and the urban environment are shown. Also included are related socioeconomic information on population, household income and the incidence of poverty.

The HUD data include information on the volume of housing production under the HUD/FHA Mortgage Insurance programs, mortgage terminations, defaults, claims paid, and production and occupancy data on the Low-Income (Public) Housing and Section 8 programs.

Information shown for the Section 8 program includes reservations, construction starts, completions and the number of units occupied. An historical series on the characteristics of home mortgage transactions under HUD/FHA's basic home mortgage program, Section 203, provides a portrait of the average home purchaser and the typical home in terms of its physical dimensions and the amenities provided.

The Community Planning and Development section covers the Community Development Block Grant, Urban Development Action Grant, Comprehensive Planning Assistance, Housing Rehabilitation Loan, and Urban Homesteading programs. The funding formulas and the grant allocation calculation are explained and approvals are shown by State and category of assistance.

Information shown for the Urban Development Action Grant program includes grant approvals and characteristics, and housing, project, and employment type characteristics. For the Housing Rehabilitation Loan program, a State distribution of approved loans is shown for the first time.

The Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity section includes information on the administration of Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (Fair Housing) and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Section 109 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974.

The Policy Development and Research section includes information on Housing Assistance Research, originations of mortgage loans, measures of housing inadequacy, indicators of neighborhood quality, etc. Programs of the Office of Neighborhoods, Voluntary Associations, and Consumer

Protection, the Federal Insurance Administration, the Government National Mortgage Association, the Federal Disaster Administration, and the New Community Development Corporation are also shown.

Some of the interesting statistics shown in the Yearbook include the following:

- During FY 1978, the first year of funding for the Urban Development Action Grant program, total private investment generated in severely distressed cities and urban counties totaled \$2.4 billion.
- Since 1934 when the Federal Housing Administration was established, HUD/FHA has insured over 12.6 billion home mortgage and 2.5 billion multifamily mortgages, together totaling \$237 billion.
- During 1978, HUD/FHA insured 349,209 Home Improvement loans and 22,375 Mobile Home loans.
- Defaults on HUD/FHA insured home mortgages during 1978 represented 1.15 percent of insured mortgages in force and the second smallest number of defaults since 1960.
- As of June 30, 1978, some 1,100,614 low-income public housing units were occupied. About 47 percent of the occupants were black, 38 percent were white and the balance other minority groups.
- As of December 31, 1978, some 582,038 housing units were occupied under the Section 8 program.
- Thirty-three percent of funds budgeted in FY 1978 for communities entitled to Community Development Block grants was allocated to public works and 15 percent for housing rehabilitation loans and grants.
- Annual contributions by HUD to Local Housing Authorities under the Low-Income (Public) Housing programs totaled \$2.6 billion in FY 1978 and \$14.4 billion since the inception of these programs.
- The average price of a new single-family home purchased under HUD/FHA's basic home mortgage program (Sec. 203) in 1978 was \$40,828. The median sales price of all new homes sold in 1978 was \$55,700 and for existing homes the median price was \$48,700.

The 1978 HUD Statistical Yearbook is for sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. The stock number is 023-000-00-579-4. The price is \$7.50.

*Prepared by Robert E. Ryan, HUD
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